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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6994th meeting of the Security Council, held on 10 July 2013, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has been briefed by the Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations following the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

"The Security Council recalls all its previous resolutions and the statements of its president on the situation in Lebanon.

"The Security Council is encouraged by the calm that continues to prevail across the Blue Line and in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon's (UNIFIL) area of operations. It urges all parties to make every effort to ensure that the cessation of hostilities is sustained, and emphasizes the need for them to continue working with the Special Coordinator and UNIFIL, including through the tripartite mechanism, to focus again on the goal of a permanent ceasefire and to reflect positively on ways forward on all outstanding issues in the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1701 (2006), 1680 (2006), and 1559 (2004) and other relevant Security Council resolutions. The Council also recalls the necessity for all parties to ensure the security of the contributing troops and that the freedom of movement of UNIFIL is fully respected and unimpeded.

"The Security Council expresses deep concern at all violations of Lebanon's sovereignty and calls on all parties to fully respect Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence within its internationally recognized borders, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

"As the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon's stability and security becomes more and more apparent, the Security Council underscores its growing concern at the marked increase of cross-border fire from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon, which caused death and injury among the Lebanese population, as well as incursions, abductions, and arms trafficking across the Lebanese-Syrian border. The Security Council also expresses its concern at all other border violations. The Security Council echoes President Michel Sleiman's protest, in his letter of June 18, 2013 at such repeated

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shelling from the conflicting parties, including by the Syrian Arab armed Forces and Syrian armed opposition groups, that violate Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"The Security Council further notes with deep concern new developments with regard to the involvement of Lebanese parties in the fighting in Syria. The Security Council calls upon all Lebanese parties to recommit to Lebanon's policy of disassociation, to stand united behind President Michel Sleiman in this regard and to step back from any involvement in the Syrian crisis, consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration of 12th of June 2012. The Security Council further echoes President Sleiman's call on the parties in Syria to avoid military action near the Lebanese border.

"In the face of attempts to undermine the country's stability, the Security Council encourages all parties in Lebanon to demonstrate renewed unity and determination to resist a slide into conflict and commends in this regard the continued efforts of President Michel Sleiman to preserve Lebanon's unity and stability and underlines that continued broad political support is needed for the institutions of the State.

"The Council urges all parties in Lebanon to continue to engage with Prime Minister designate Tammam Salam so as to allow the urgent formation of a government. The Security Council further encourages all Lebanese leaders to resume efforts to agree arrangements for parliamentary elections, consistent with Lebanon's long standing democratic tradition and in conformity with the legal and constitutional framework.

"The Security Council also stresses the need to support the security and judicial authorities so as to combat impunity in respects of acts of violence. It also recalls the need to put an end to impunity in Lebanon and reiterates its full support for the work of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and urges the Lebanese authorities to continue meeting their international obligations in this regard, including on financial matters. The Council calls upon all parties to fully cooperate with the Tribunal.

"The Security Council also condemns recent violence by armed groups across Lebanon, including those in Tripoli and Sidon, the latter of which left at least 16 soldiers dead and over 50 others wounded and expresses condolences to the families of the victims. The Security Council also acknowledges the crucial role played by the Lebanese security and armed forces in extending and sustaining the authority of the State and responding to new security challenges. The Council calls on Lebanon's leaders across the whole spectrum and Lebanese of all communities to offer every possible support to the Lebanese Armed Forces as a national and neutral institution and central pillar of the country's stability.

"The Security Council is gravely concerned at the dramatic influx of refugees fleeing violence in Syria, now totalling over 587,000 Syrian refugees and an additional 65,500 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The Council commends Lebanon's generous efforts in hosting and assisting those refugees and encourages the establishment of fully empowered institutional structures to carry out planning, delivery and coordination responsibilities.

"The Security Council stresses the need for strong, coordinated international support for Lebanon to help it continue to withstand the multiple current challenges to its security and stability. It encourages increased international support to the Lebanese Armed Forces, in response to their recently launched capabilities development plan as well as in the context of the Strategic Dialogue between the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL. It notes the particular urgency of assistance which would strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces' capabilities with respect to border control.

"As for the refugee crisis, the Security Council underlines the need for assistance on an unprecedented scale, both to meet the needs of the refugees and of host communities, and to assist the Lebanese authorities who face extraordinary financial and structural challenges as a result of the refugee influx. The Council calls in this regard upon the international community to provide the required assistance as swiftly as possible to the latest joint appeal of the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon and in this regard urges those Member States which committed themselves to providing funds to live up to their pledges."